



Supporting Ordinands through Initial Training

A Guide to IMEI

2017

A reference handbook for DDOs and Vocations Teams



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Introduction



Keith Beech-Gruneberg

"You did not choose me but I chose you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last." The call of Christ on our lives as disciples is a foundational call which underpins all that God might subsequently do in the lives of those called to a specific lay or ordained ministry in the Church. The training process for ordained ministry is rooted in that call and is part of an ongoing process of formation.

Formation is about God's loving relationship to the diverse creation and God's invitation for people to discover and join in God's mission in the world. It produces in us the kind of Christlikeness holiness that is a mark of all disciples. It is a vision of life in all its fullness and has a particular focus in the life and community of the Church.

The Church of England currently has the ambitious target of significantly increasing the number of ordinands. It wishes to ensure each receives a training which prepares them to be the missional, adaptable and collaborative ministers the church needs to fulfil its vocation in twenty-first century Britain. That training needs to be appropriate to the particular candidate, in accordance with shared church-wide expectations and a discerning use of the church's resources. It needs to be shaped by the givens of Christian faith, the accumulated wisdom of the Christian tradition, and the demands of the present context.

Responsibility for each ordinand, and for deciding on their training pathway, ultimately belongs to the sponsoring bishop. Ensuring ordinands are appropriately trained and supported during that training is therefore an important role for those such as DDOs who advise and act on behalf of sponsoring bishops, as well as for the Theological Education Institutions at which the ordinands train. It will require as appropriate amongst many other qualities care, discernment, prayer, creativity and delight.

The aim of this Guide is to inform those in dioceses undertaking such roles of the policies, processes and good practice that may be relevant to them in their dealing with candidates prior to and during their training up to the point of ordination. Separate Guides cover the selection process and issues relating to finance, and these may also be relevant. These Guides replace the previous DDO handbook.

Further advice either on general points or in relation to specific candidates is always available from the IME Pathways Adviser in Ministry Division.

Keith Beech-Gruneberg

IME Pathways Adviser

Other Resources



MINISTRY

MINISTRY

Growing Vocations Everywhere

One of the most exciting developments in today's church is a growing conviction that every Christian has a calling under God which needs to be recognised, trained up, and pursued with vigour and enthusiasm.

The Church has set itself an ambitious aspiration to increase the numbers of candidates entering training by 50%, so that the Church remains equipped to live out its mission for generations to come. Such a task requires proactive effort from the whole church. Vocations work will therefore constitute a major aspect of the work of every diocese.

Growing Vocations Everywhere: A Good Practice Guide is a practical handbook to support you in this effort. Based on thorough research of what works, it shares examples of good practice from across the country, and includes a helpful checklist to help you plan your vocations work. Our good practice guide is available from Ministry Division and online.

Growing Vocations Everywhere A Good Practice Guide

A reference handbook for dioceses and parishe

Sending Candidates to BAP

Selection is best understood as a process of discerning, with others, the will of God for an individual with regard to the exercising of an appropriate ministry within the Church. Selection is therefore more like a pilgrimage of discovery than an examination. This does not preclude a wise and careful appraisal of a candidate and the gathering and assessment of information concerning each individual.

Pre-selection procedures vary between dioceses but should be coherent, rigorous and appropriate to enable the Bishop to make well-informed decisions about sponsoring candidates.

Sending Candidates to BAP is a practical handbook to support you in preparing candidates for selection for training for ordained ministry. It is available from Ministry Division and online.



Sending Candidates to BAP

A Guide to the Selection Process

2017

A reference handbook for DDOs and Vocations Teams

Resourcing Ministerial Education

To support a growing number of ordinands, a new financial framework has been introduced to support training for ordination. The new system offers greater flexibility and accountability, as well as promoting closer relationships between dioceses and theological education institutions.

Practical guidance and explanation on the financial arrangements for ordination training are provided in Resourcing Ministerial Education - A Guide to the new Financial Arrangements.

The handbook is available from Ministry Division and online.

Resourcing Ministerial Education

A Guide to the new Financial Arrangements

Version 2: July 2017

A reference handbook for dioceses and TEIs

These four documents collectively replace the previous DDO Handbook.



Part One: Choices about training

I.I Giving Advice

The DDO should advise candidates on the training they will undertake, and is likely also to be asked to advise the bishop on this. To do this, the DDO will need to be aware of:

- 1. The national framework governing training, particularly the Bishops' Guidelines for Ordinand Pathways in IME1 (see Part 2).
- 2. The training options available (see Part 4).
- 3. Financial implications (see the RME Handbook).
- 4. Any diocesan policies or practices for candidates, such as wishing to support a particular local course.

1.2 Making Decisions

It is ultimately for the bishop to decide how a candidate will train. The candidate is training for the ordained ministry of the Church, with the costs of training borne by the Church. While the bishop will of course take account of the needs and preferences of the candidate, the candidate does not have a right to insist on any particular training pathway.

The DDO will normally explore with the candidate the needs and preferences they articulate, and may need to challenge these, in order to advise the bishop's decision.

Section 9 of the Bishops Guidelines indicate the issues a DDO or bishop may wish to consider in thinking about the most appropriate training for a particular candidate. An example working sheet DDOs may wish to use in assessing these is found in Appendix A. Blank copies are available from Ministry Division and online.

Ministry Division staff are happy to give advice to DDOs at any point. Please contact the IME Pathways Adviser for advice about training choices.

Part Two: Bishops' Guidelines for Ordinand Pathways in IME I

1. Making decisions

The Bishops' Guidelines seek to create a **flexible framework** within which good decisions can be made for the training of a diverse range of candidates for ordination called by God to serve the church and world. Decisions on training pathways are always matters of **discernment of the needs of the candidate and the church**, and often a matter of weighing a number of different factors. Therefore there can be no neat formula for determining the appropriate pathway for a particular ordinand. Dioceses will also need to **have regard to the cost implications of the choice of pathway.**

2. Responsibility for decisions

It is ultimately the responsibility of the bishop to decide on an ordinand's training pathway, in consultation with the ordinand, the DDO and the training institution, and in light of the agreed policy of the House of Bishops. In principle a pathway includes every aspect of the ordinand's formation and training and sets parameters for the training. It allows the TEI flexibility on matters of detail which can be discussed with the diocese.



3. The goal of IME I

The goal of any IMEI pathway is to ensure that good foundations are in place for the ordinand's ongoing learning and ministry, including that the ordinand fulfils the relevant formational criteria agreed by the House of Bishops for the point of ordination. It is reasonable to ask a candidate for ordination to train beyond the minimum required if this enhances their future ministry.

4. Training institution

Other than in the most exceptional circumstances, ordinands will train through **an institution** (or on occasion more than one institution) **accredited by Ministry Council of behalf of the House of Bishops** to offer ordination training for the Church of England, whose standard training pathways for ordinands have been given specific validation.

5. Corporate dimensions of training

The church values both diversity in its ordinands as individuals, and the corporate and community dimensions of training, where ordinands learn with and from others, and give to others as well as receiving from them. **Appropriate training pathways are generally those which place the ordinand in a cohort of other ordinands** for at least a significant part of their learning, rather than pathways shaped primarily around the personal requirements or features of the particular candidate. Ordinands may also be part of a cohort of others training for lay ministries and this can supplement the corporate aspect of their formation.

6. Length of training

Unless ordinands have significant relevant prior learning they will normally train on either a 3 year part-time pathway, a 2 year full-time pathway or a 3 year full-time pathway. Only in the most exceptional cases will training take less than I year. Some key considerations around deciding on length of training and variations from the norm are identified in paragraph 9 below.

7. Level of training and HE accreditation

When aspects of an IME pathway are HE accredited, ordination candidates for incumbent focus almost always achieve a Diploma of Higher Education (level 5), a Bachelor's Degree or a higher award in theology/ministry unless they have such an award already. Candidates for assistant focus generally achieve a Diploma of Higher Education or an award at a level above this. In order to meet the formation criteria all candidates require a level of understanding and skill characteristic of level 5, though an academic award is not the only way in which such understanding and skill can be demonstrated.

8. Advice from Ministry Division

It is expected that in cases which depart from what is set out as normal in the Bishops' Guidelines, advice will be sought from the Pathways Adviser in Ministry Division. This is both to provide support where needed and also as a matter of mutual accountability over the use of Vote I resources which are held in common and over agreed standards of training for the national cohort of clergy.



9. Factors which may influence individual decisions

Factors which may influence the shape and length of the training undertaken by a particular candidate include:

- a. Existing personal and emotional maturity
 - cf. Selection and formation criteria relating to personality and character, and relationships
 - e.g. Someone who has not yet demonstrated resilience and growth in the face of a wide range of life events may benefit from longer in formation/training than someone who has done so
- b. Existing faith development
 - cf. Selection and formation criteria relating to faith and spirituality
 - e.g. Someone who has relatively recently come to faith may need longer formation/training than someone with a long history of active Christian discipleship
- c. Existing ministerial or missional experience
 - cf. Selection and formation criteria relating to ministry in the Church of England, leadership and collaboration, mission and evangelism
 - e.g. Someone with five years' experience of Reader ministry may need less ordination formation/ training as a result

Long experience will in general be a valuable resource on which the candidate may draw. However sometimes it may mean the candidate is set in particular ways of thinking and behaving which may need time to modify.

- d. Prior study, especially of ministry and/or theology
 - cf. selection and formation criteria relating to faith and quality of mind
 - e.g. Someone who has 120 credits at HE level of study addressing areas across the ministerial curriculum may need less ordination formation/training as a result (degrees in 'Theology and Religion' will need careful assessment to see how much of the normal content of ministerial training is included); some pathways may assume those coming on them are already graduates in another discipline
- e. Existing transferable experience (and evidence of the ability to transfer it)
 - cf. selection and formation criteria relating to mission and evangelism, leadership and collaboration, and relationships
 - e.g. Someone who has worked for several years full-time as a community worker, and can relate this to the role of a deacon may need less formation/training than someone with no such experience
- f. Envisaged future ministry
 - e.g. Is the candidate being prepared for the demands of assistant-focus or incumbent-focus ministry?
 Are they being equipped to minister in one context for the next few years or for ministry in potentially a diverse range of contexts across several decades?
- g. Personal characteristics, with full inclusion of those with disabilities a particular priority
 - e.g. Preferred ways of learning
- h. Personal circumstances including family circumstances
 - e.g. Can training be combined with the candidate's existing employment? What would the effect of different training options be on the candidate's family?
- i. Particular development needs
 - e.g. It may be desirable for a particular candidate to undertake a pathway with particular emphasis on interfaith engagement; it may be desirable for a potential theological educator to undertake a higher degree in their training (and possibly for them to have extra time for this)



Part Three: The Candidate Formation Plan

3.1 Purpose of the plan

The Candidate Formation Plan (See Appendix B), allows you to record what is envisaged for the candidate's formational pathway. It thus ensures clarity on expectations. It is an evolving document, and anything recorded on it may be provisional and indicative. Any firm commitments made by diocese, candidate or TEI will need to be recorded in some other way as well as reflected on the plan.

3.2 Keeping the plan up to date

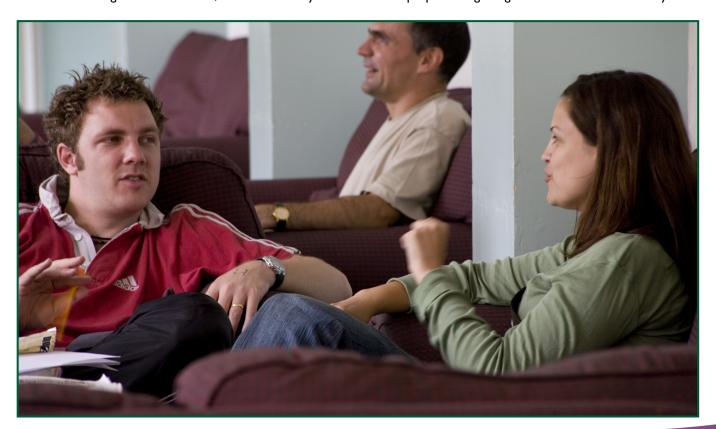
The plan should be updated as necessary, and needs to be up to date at the following points:

- 1. Submission of paperwork for the candidate's BAP;
- 2. The candidate's beginning IMEI;
- 3. Before the candidate's sponsoring diocese either offers them a title post or grants them permission to look for a title post in another diocese;
- 4. The candidate's beginning IME2.

The plan and any revisions to it must be agreed by the candidate and by the DDO/IME officer on behalf of the diocese, consulting if necessary with relevant training institutions.

3.3 Sharing the plan

The most recent version of the plan should be held by the candidate's diocese (by the DDO or IME officer as appropriate). Either diocese or candidate may share the plan with a TEI at which the candidate might train, with another diocese in which the candidate might serve their title, and with Ministry Division for the purposes of gaining advice or for statistical analysis.





Part Four: Training Institutions and Pathways

4.1 Every TEI is different

There are a number of TEIs (Theological Education Institutions) approved to deliver ordination training. Their programmes undergo a curriculum validation process, and they are subject to five-yearly Periodic External Review on behalf of the church in order that dioceses can send ordinands to them with confidence that they will receive the training they need in preparation for ordination. A list of TEIs and pathways is available from Ministry Division and online.

Each TEI has its own character and distinctiveness. The majority offer a range of pathways suitable for ordination training, and are generally willing to agree variations to meet the needs of particular candidates.

DDOs will therefore need to get a sense of the different options available to candidates. TEls produce their own materials to present themselves to DDOs and candidates, and many also encourage DDOs to visit them.

4.2 Types of pathway

There are three broad groupings of training pathways:

Full-time 'residential' – The key feature of this is that the ordinand is expected to be present at the TEI's premises most weekdays during term time. Many ordinands will be resident at the TEI or nearby, but others may commute each day (or in some cases stay at the TEI during the week, while returning to a family home at the weekend).

Full-time non-residential – Most of these pathways are sometimes referred to as 'context-based', since they expect the ordinand to spend a significant part of the week learning through exercising ministry in a particular context and reflecting on this in conjunction with teaching at the TEI. However there are also 'residential' pathways which the TEI describes as context-based because of the amount of contextual engagement included, and there are also full-time non-residential pathways which do not have this level of contextual engagement.

DDOs need to be aware that:

- Some of these pathways expect the ordinand to put in the equivalent of a full-time working week all year; others may offer more flexibility. The Church regards all these pathways as 'full-time' whatever else the individual ordinand may do, except that the provisions for accommodation and maintenance for full-time ordinands only apply if the diocese and TEI are expecting the ordinand to be doing the equivalent of full-time employment.
- When ordinands are engaging substantially with a particular context as part of their training, what they do
 must be primarily shaped to foster their learning and formation towards ordained ministry, rather than being
 primarily about how they might be useful in that context (though it is of course very much hoped and
 expected that they will indeed be that). The diocese may wish to be involved in the choice of the context.

Part-time non-residential – this is sometimes referred to as 'course' training. Training will include some elements of residence (e.g. typically six residential weekends per year and a summer or Easter school) as well as other sessions, often a weekly evening class.



Part Five: Processes for those entering training, especially approval of individual pathways

5.1 Finance for training

The processes required to ensure funding is received are set out in the *RME Handbook*. It is particularly important to note that a Confirmation of Training form must be received by Ministry Division by I st September if a candidate is to be included in the calculation for the diocese's block grant for the autumn term.

5.2 Individual pathways

Every training institution has one or more defined pathways which have been given validation as a standard pathway for ordinands. Where it is proposed that an ordinand do anything other than one of these, this must be given individual approval if the diocese is to spend money deriving from its block grant on the training. This ensures continuing confidence that all ordained ministers have received appropriate training, and mutual accountability for the spending of funds contributed by all the dioceses.

Approval for individual pathways is the responsibility of the Individual Pathways Panel, though for speed and simplicity many cases can be approved by Ministry Division staff on behalf of the Panel. (If staff turn down a request, appeal may be made to the Panel.)

The exception is proposals for training seeking permission for candidates to undertake a Research Degree, since these are assessed by the Research Degrees Panel.

Proposals for individual pathway approval are assessed for their formational appropriateness, in light of the following considerations:

- 1. their ability to enable the candidate to fulfil and demonstrate fulfilment of the formational criteria;
- 2. their value for preparing the candidate for their envisaged future ministry;
- 3. their integration and coherence;
- 4. the extent to which they enable the candidate to be formed in community, including engagement with others training for licensed ministry;
- 5. their appropriateness for the particular candidate;
- 6. their compatibility with Bishops' Guidelines.

If you are proposing a pathway for an ordinand which will need individual approval, please get in touch with the IME Pathways Adviser who will ensure it is handled appropriately. While strictly it is dioceses who should seek approval for pathways, it may sometimes be easier for a TEI to do so, and that is perfectly acceptable if the diocese is happy with this.

In general, it is best for approval to be sought after the ordinand has been to a BAP. However if the ordinand is coming to a BAP late in the academic year, or the training proposal is complex or unusual, it would be better at least to start the process of seeking individual pathway approval before the BAP. You are of course welcome to seek advice at any point.



Part Six: Contact during training

When candidates are in training, responsibility for their formation and for pastoral care for them and their families becomes the concern of their TEI in the first instance. However DDOs retain overall responsibility for their candidates during training, and will need to keep in appropriate contact with them and with the TEI during the training period.

Points to consider include:

- I. At the start of training there may be particular concern about the needs of the candidate or their family. The DDO should share such concerns with the TEI, particularly if they were not noted in the BAP report
- TEI staff should be trusted to work freely with candidates without the need for frequent reports when things are
 going well. However, where there are serious problems it is important that the TEI is in contact with the DDO
 and that where necessary the Bishop is informed.
- 3. Some candidates go through low periods in training. The DDO might help by encouraging contact between the diocese and its candidates, for example by organising gatherings of candidates (at an appropriate time of year) and encouraging parishes to pray for their candidates, and to keep in contact with them if they have moved away.
- 4. Candidates on courses may have difficulty in keeping an appropriate balance between the obligations of work, study, parish and family. The DDO is likely to be in closer contact with candidates on courses and so able to check the situation.
- 5. Anxieties are often be focused on money. The candidate should have a clear understanding of available financial support at the start of training. DDOs may have provision in the budget to help candidates cope with emergencies.
- 6. There may be occasions when a candidate ought not to proceed towards ordination. Such decisions must not be avoided or put off. The DDO will need to liaise closely with the TEI and the sponsoring bishop in this situation and may be in the best position to press the question. The relevant National Adviser for Selection at Ministry Division will need to be informed if any major issues or changes arise during training.





Part Seven: Changes in training

7.1 Maternity, paternity or adoption

Since ordinands are students, not employees or office-holders under Common Tenure, they have no formal rights to maternity, paternity or adoption leave. However we would expect dioceses and TEIs to agree appropriate arrangements with candidates in all these circumstances, and to notify Ministry Division.

Permission is not needed, unless this leads to the candidate undertaking a non-standard training pathway which will then need pathway approval (though clearly such requests will be regarded very sympathetically).

7.2 Change of pathway / change of TEI

On occasion it may be appropriate for a candidate to change their training pathway within their TEI, or to move to another TEI. As with all pathway matters the decision lies ultimately with the bishop, not the TEI or candidate, though clearly TEIs and candidates should always be consulted (and in the case of an ordinand moving to another TEI this includes both TEIs involved).

In either case, Ministry Division needs to be notified, and it is normally advisable to seek advice at an early stage. Always in the latter case and generally in the former this will mean that the candidate's programme will not be a standard pathway, and so pathway approval will be needed if it is to be funded with money from the block grant.

7.3 Suspension of or withdrawal from training

Occasionally it may be necessary for a candidate to suspend training (with the agreement of the diocese and the TEI) or withdraw from training. Ministry Division needs to be notified immediately for funding purposes.

If the candidate wishes to resume training after more than three months, the permission of Candidates Panel is required (except in cases of maternity, paternity or adoption leave).





Part Eight: Reporting and title posts

8.1 Reports from training institutions on candidates

Training institutions report on candidates to the sponsoring or ordaining Bishop at least twice during training. An interim report is made in the penultimate year of training, which for most candidates is due on 20th June. Final reports must be with the Bishop by 31st May for Petertide ordinations or four weeks before ordination at Michaelmas.

Full guidance on this area is given in the Code of procedure: reports on sponsored candidates, arrangements for first appointments and assessment at the end of curacy available from Ministry Division and online.

8.2 Actions to be taken on the receipt of the Interim Report

On receipt of the interim report from the training institution the DDO should ask candidates who intend to exercise stipendiary ministry to fill in the Statement of Financial Position for a second time. The DDO will need to follow up any issues if necessary.

Please note that medical procedures are **not** completed until an ordinand has been offered a title post (see below).

8.3 Title posts

It is important that DDOs ensure that candidates fully understand that recommendation for training is precisely that: it is not recommendation for ordination, nor a guarantee of a title post.

Once training has begun, a candidate's attention should be drawn to the *Code of procedure*: reports on sponsored candidates, arrangements for first appointments and assessment at the end of curacy. Diocesan procedure should be explained at an early stage, including where responsibility for this work lies and circumstances in which a candidate may be released to another diocese. Liaison with those responsible for IME2 will be essential.

While dioceses will want to plan in outline for placing deacons, it is important not to enter into discussions about a particular title post before the receipt of the interim report. Candidates' time in training is already short and they need to be settled in training for the duration of the first year (or in the case of three-year candidates, the first two years). Further, the interim report itself is an important part of the information about a candidate that should be taken into account when decisions about title posts are made.

The offer of a title post for all candidates needs to be offered on condition of medical clearance being received from the Senior Medical Adviser. Please see the Medical Procedures Booklet for further information. (Note: the medical procedures are carried out after the title post has been conditionally offered, not before. However they should be begun as soon as possible, since they can sometimes take a significant time to complete.)

The appointments of candidates to title posts fall within the scope of the Equality Act. It is therefore important that clear processes are followed, and a record kept of the reasons for appointments made (parallel to what would be done for making an appointment to an employed position).

8.4 Information about candidates moving dioceses

Candidates will sometimes move dioceses, for example, in searching for a title post. In this situation there needs to be clarity about, firstly, the availability of reports on candidates from training institutions and, secondly, access to the information about the candidate held by the sponsoring diocese. Where a candidate is seeking a title post in a diocese other than his or her sponsoring diocese, the (potential) ordaining Bishop may:

- I. request the interim and/or final report from the training institution which the training institution should provide on request;
- request a copy of relevant papers from the sponsoring diocese's file on the candidate. Two principles need to be borne in mind: first, the need to inform the potential ordaining Bishop about the candidate so that the bishop can make an informed decision about ordination, second, the need to comply with the Data Protection Act (including the need to be accurate, up-to-date and relevant).



Appendix A: DDO Working Sheet (EXAMPLE)

Ordinand Training Pathway - DDO Working Sheet

Candidate Name: Jane Wilson

Factor	Comment
Existing personal and emotional maturity	Good general maturity, but aware that needs to develop robustness under pressure.
Existing faith development	Came to active faith in teens; has consistently practised it since.
Existing ministerial or missional experience	Leading church cafe on Trollope Estate. Has led worship and preached occasionally at St Saviours. On PCC. Member of Baptist churches until four years ago.
Prior study, especially of ministry and/or theology	Degree in theology – solid coverage of biblical studies, church history, doctrine, ethics; two modules on other faiths; no practical theology.
Existing transferable experience (and evidence of the ability to transfer it)	Runs own business; reflects well on entrepreneurial skills.
	Potential incumbent
Envisaged future ministry	Pioneer
	Staying on Trollope Estate for medium term, but in ten years
Personal characteristics with full inclusion of those with disabilities a particular priority	
Personal circumstances including family circumstances	Staying on Trollope Estate works well for family.
Particular development needs	Needs to engage more with work on pioneering in the church and Fresh Expressions.



Appendix B: Candidate Formation Plan (EXAMPLE)

Candidate Formation Plan

for ordained ministry in the Church of England

Name	Jane Wilson
Date of birth	1980
Diocese	Barchester
Envisaged category of ministry	Incumbent - pioneer
Particular areas of interest or focus	
Particular prior study or experience affecting training pathway	BA in Theology (2:1), University of Merseyside
Date of last revision	9/10/16

Pre-IME I

Particular areas of development for this phase and how they might be addressed

Particular areas of development	How these might be addressed

IMEI

Mode	Context-based	
Length	2 years	
Institution	St Matthias	
Award	Common Awards Graduate Diploma	

Description of pathway

- Based on continuing work on the Trollope Estate within St Saviour's parish
- Selection of modules taken to complement work undertaken on previous theology degree to include a range
 of modules from across the normal 3 year programme, not all of which will be part of the Graduate Diploma
- As agreed with St Matthias, to take some pioneer courses with the Northern Pioneer Centre

Particular areas of development for this phase and how they might addressed:

Particular areas of development	How these might be addressed
Understanding of the theory and practice of Fresh Expressions	Courses with Northern Pioneer Centre



Appendix B: Candidate Formation Plan (EXAMPLE), continued

IME2

FTE or hours given specifically to ministry	Full-time
Stipendiary or SSM	Stipendiary
Length	3-4 years
Primary context	Trollope Estate (within St Saviour's parish)
Secondary context I (if any)	
Secondary context 2 (if any)	

Training provision

- Will be important to ensure appropriate balance between work developing a Fresh Expression on the Trollope Estate and wider involvement in St Saviour's parish
- Ongoing involvement with the Northern Pioneer Centre network in addition to diocesan training

Particular areas of development for this phase and how they might be addressed

Particular areas of development	How these might be addressed
Working with children and young people	tbd

Additional comments (if any):

If a Fresh Expression is developed on the Trollope Estate it may be desirable for Jane not to move for several years after the end point of IME2. Jane has indicated that she would expect to offer a degree of flexibility at that point, including the possibility of moving to SSM.